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WIGSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

for the year 1943.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my fifth annual report on the health of your district.

In accordance with instructions received from the Ministry of Health, the report is again produced in a very abbreviated form, and the publication of figures relating to population and the numbers of births and deaths is postponed until the termination of the war.

The general health of the population has remained satisfactory. The birth rate of 21.9 is remarkably high and has only been exceeded on two occasions since 1914. In 1916 and 1920 the rates were 22.0 and 23.4 respectively. Factors which have contributed to this high birth rate are an increased desire for children among recently married women - possibly a reaction to the disrupting effect of war-time conditions on family life, and also a relatively high proportion of women of child bearing age who are resident in Wigston on account of the war.

In contrast to the extremely low death rate of 10.2 recorded in the previous year, the rate of 13.3 is distinctly high, and as the increases are in the more elderly age groups, it appears that the high rate of 1943 is a compensatory feature following the low rate of 1942. A slight improvement is noticeable in the infant mortality rate which has fallen from 77 to 63.

It must be remembered that the figures in this report relate to civilians only, and that the registration of births and deaths are referred to the area of usual residence. The precise rules adopted by the Registrar-General for the recording of war-time vital statistics have been described in my annual reports for 1939-42.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Birth rate per thousand estimated resident population 1943			21.9
Birth rate for Leicestershire 1943			19.5
Birth rate for England and Wales 1943			16.5
Illegitimate birth rate per thousand live births			66.0
Illegitimate birth rate for Leicestershire			52.0
Death rate (crude) per thousand estimated population			13.3
Death rate (corrected)	not available		
Death rate for Leicestershire			11.3
Death rate for England and Wales			12.1
Deaths from puerperal causes:			
Puerperal sepsis, No. of deaths			Nil
Other puerperal causes, No. of deaths			2
Puerperal mortality rate for England and Wales per thousand total live and still births			2.29
Deaths of infants under one year of age:	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	9	5	14
Illegitimate	3	1	4
Infant Mortality rate per thousand live births			63
Infant mortality rate for England and Wales			49
Deaths from certain diseases:			
Diphtheria			0
Whooping Cough			1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)			1
Pulmonary tuberculosis			6
Non-pulmonary tuberculosis			0
Cancer			30

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

I am indebted to the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. F. B. Ashbridge, for the following details:-

Water Supply.

Water of excellent quality from Leicester City Corporation mains is supplied to all except a few outlying properties. 17 houses obtain water from private wells, 62 obtain it from standpipes outside the houses, and of the latter approximately one half are scheduled for demolition. The remainder of the 4,200 occupied houses have piped supplies laid into the houses.

Drainage and Sewage.

There have been no changes of importance in these services.

Public Cleansing and Salvage.

An efficient service has been maintained. Kitchen waste is collected twice a week; refuse and other salvage is removed once a fortnight.

The quantities of all types of salvage continue to compare very favourably with other districts of similar population.

Closet Accommodation.

Total numbers in the district on 31st December, 1942 -

(a) Privies	Nil
(b) Pail closets	24
(c) Water closets	4,785

There were no conversions during the year.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Total number of complaints received during the year	173
" " " defects or nuisances discovered	317
" " " inspections	628
" " " " (re-visits)	1,762
" " " preliminary notices served (Housing	193
(Other notices	76
" " " " " complied with (Housing	173
(Other notices	122
" " " notices outstanding on 31st December, 1942	
(Housing	25
(Other notices	Nil
" " " statutory notices served	4
" " " " " complied with	4

No summary action has been taken during the year.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

Total number of dwelling houses found infested (Council houses	Nil
(Other houses	26
" " " " " disinfested	26

Inspection of Dwelling Houses.

1. (a) Total No. of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	454
(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose	1,108
2. No. of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidation Regulations 1925 and 1932	Nil
3. No. of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	Nil

4.	No. of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	170
5.	No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or its officers.	48
6.	No. of defective dwelling houses in respect of which action under statutory powers was taken	Nil
7.	No. of cases of overcrowding reported during the year	7
8.	No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year.	8

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.

Retailers:- (other than cowkeepers)	No. on register	68
	No. of inspections of premises	26
	No. of contraventions found	Nil
	No. of contraventions remedied	Nil
Producers:- (including those who retail milk)	No. on register	19
	No. of inspections	73
	No. of contraventions found	Nil
	No. of contraventions remedied	Nil

Milk Sampling:

Designated Milk:	Total No. of samples taken for bacteriological examination	18
	No. of samples satisfactory	18
	No. of samples not satisfactory	Nil
Ordinary Milk:	Total No. of samples taken for bacteriological examination	136
	114 samples Grade I, 17 Grade II, 3 Grade III and 2 Grade IV.	

Investigations are made when any samples are found below Grade II and repeat samples are taken.

Meat and Other Foods.

There are no regional slaughter houses in the area. 32 animals have been slaughtered in the district during the year. All the carcases were inspected.

No. of Inspections:

Knackers yards	20
Meat stalls	Nil
Meat shops and stores	170
Places where food other than meat is kept or prepared for sale	28

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Diphtheria:

Every effort is made to encourage all parents to have their children immunised against diphtheria; and I am grateful to health visitors and teachers for the co-operation which they are giving in the field of propaganda. Special immunisation clinics are held in both Wigston Magna and South Wigston and a monthly clinic is held at the County Offices in Leicester.

85 children under the age of 5, and 224 between the ages of 5 and 15 were immunised during the year, and on the 31st December, 1943, it was estimated that the percentages immunised were 58.5 and 93.6 respectively.

Table showing cases of infectious diseases notified during the year.

Disease	Under 1 yr.	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-	65-	All ages.	Cases admitted to hospital.	Deaths
Small Pox	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1 carrer 5 obs.	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-	1	4	2	19	6	1	1	-	1	-	39	36	-
Cerebro-spinal Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	1	2	7	-	6
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	3	2	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-
Dysentery	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	-
Pemphigus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Measles	2	11	18	13	20	76	4	3	2	-	-	-	149	-	-
Whooping Cough	1	2	1	2	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	1	1

Table showing particulars of new cases and deaths from Tuberculosis.

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
25-	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
35-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
45-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
55-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
65-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
All ages	6	1	1	-	4	2	-	-

No true cases of diphtheria occurred during the year. 5 suspicious cases, (4 of which were adults) were not confirmed bacteriologically, and one adult admitted to hospital as a carrier had no clinical symptoms.

Measles and Whooping Cough:

The 1942 epidemic of measles continued into the early part of 1943, and 149 cases were notified.

Influenza:

A sharp epidemic of influenza occurred in November and created a considerable amount of dislocation of civilian life. The cases were mild and 3 deaths only were certified as due to influenza.

Scabies:

Cases of scabies continue to occur and a number of home visits had to be paid to ensure that treatment was carried out efficiently. In no case was it necessary to resort to compulsion under the Scabies Order, 1941.

EVACUATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

There has been little change in the number of evacuees present in the district during the year. I am indebted to the billeting officer for the following figures which show the position at the end of 1943:-

No. of unaccompanied children		27
No. of mothers billeted with children -	Mothers	26
	Children	26
Other evacuees billeted at Government expense		12
Evacuees in requisitioned houses		204

In addition there were a considerable number of people (approximately 300) who were originally evacuated to this area and who later became classed as residents in the area and responsible for their own arrangements.

The aftermath of the 1940 and 1941 evacuation continued to present Wigston with many extremely difficult and complex social problems and in this respect I must refer to the very good work carried out by Miss Keith the Welfare Officer.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I wish to acknowledge my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee and to the Officers and Staff of the Council for the ready co-operation and help which they have given me during the year.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

ALEC E. MARTIN, M.D.,D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

July 17th, 1944.